

OCI NO. 1514
COPY NO. 10

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
18 January 1954

PRE-BERLIN CONFERENCE DEVELOPMENTS - VI

Soviet note gives vague support to Austrian treaty settlement: A Soviet note of 16 January in reply to an Austrian request of 5 January generally favors conclusion of an Austrian treaty and implies Austrian participation in the negotiations. In extremely vague terms, the Soviet note indicates a willingness to "do everything in its power for a final settlement of the Austrian question" without specifically committing the Soviet Union to discuss or settle the issue at the Berlin conference. The note, in familiar terms, blames the Western powers and the Austrian government for the long delay in the completion of the treaty. The support of Austrian participation in treaty talks is possibly intended to set a precedent for all-German participation in the Berlin talks. The Western position calls for Austrian participation at the conference.

There have been other indications, from Soviet officials in Vienna, that the Soviet Union is preparing for discussion of the Austrian treaty at Berlin, where the Western powers have said they will raise the issue. Soviet officials have indicated recently, however, that the Kremlin still considers an Austrian settlement dependent on a solution of the German question.

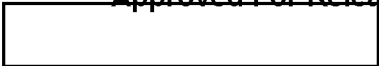
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State Dept. review completed

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Document No.	6
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Class. Changed To	TS 3 (C)
Date:	27 July 78
By:	

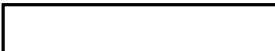

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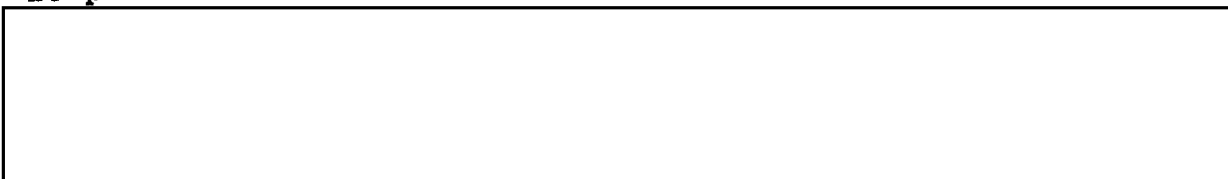
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Further East German sensitivity to demonstrations:
Another indication of East German sensitivity to antiregime demonstrations appeared in a 15 January speech by state security chief Wollweber, who claimed that groups are at work planning provocations to disrupt the four-power conference. Taegliche Rundschau quotes him as saying, "I want there to be no doubt that provocations will be very decisively dealt with as soon as they appear."

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 have suggested that Communist leaders would be deterred by the fear that such demonstrations would get out of hand.  Communist activity has been limited to the signing of petitions and holding of small meetings to propose resolutions, and that no potentially explosive demonstrations are planned.

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Pravda article clarifies Soviet concept of free elections:
A Pravda article of 14 January repeats familiar Soviet attacks on foreign control of German elections, but gives a fuller description of the Soviet plan for "free elections" than has been evident in past propaganda. "First of all it is necessary to carry out those measures which would secure the re-establishment of Germany as a democratic and peace-loving state and would prevent the restoration of Fascist order." Allegedly it is the function of a provisional all-German government to establish such conditions and to conduct elections free from the influence of elements hostile to "democracy" and the cause of peace.

These statements suggests that the Kremlin will attach conditions to its proposal for a provisional government to guarantee its pro-Communist orientation.